

Conshohocken, PA – At a critical time for the housing security of his constituents, Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) joined Housing and Urban Development Secretary Shaun Donovan, Montgomery County Commissioner Joe Hoeffel and State Representative Mike Gerber to announce \$1.1 million in economic stimulus funding for the Montgomery County Housing Authority as part of more than \$4 billion in stimulus public housing funds. The press conference took place at the Marshall Lee Towers in Conshohocken Monday morning.

“This aid will provide critical relief to the families and individuals most impacted by the recession,” said Congressman Sestak. “With the economy now in the second year of crisis, measures such as this funding are vital to the well-being of our communities. However, it takes leadership through individuals such as Joel Johnson, the head of the Montgomery County Housing Authority, to ensure that these projects come into fruition.”

The Montgomery County Housing Authority (MCHA), in partnership with community organizations, agencies and local governments, provides housing and homeownership opportunities for low and moderate income persons and families. The funds announced Monday will contribute to repairs and modernization of public housing units, as more than half of all public housing is over 30 years old.

The public housing program provides publicly owned and subsidized rental units for very low-income families. Although no new public housing developments have been built for many years, Congress continues to provide funds to the more than 3,100 public housing authorities (PHAs) that own and maintain the existing stock of more than 1.2 million units. Through the Operating Fund, HUD provides funds to PHAs to help fill the gap between tenants' contributions toward rent and the cost of ongoing maintenance, utilities, and administration of public housing. Through the Capital Fund, HUD provides funding to PHAs for large capital projects and modernization needs. HOPE VI is a competitive grant program that provides funds to help demolish and/or redevelop severely distressed public housing developments, with a focus on building mixed-income communities.

“Like the rest of the nation, Pennsylvania has been impacted by the housing crisis,” said Congressman Sestak. “If the government does not take further steps to mitigate the current housing crisis, approximately 8.5 million additional homeowners will default during the next three years and nearly five million households will ultimately lose homes in foreclosure sales, short sales, or deeds in lieu. This will further devastate the economic security of my constituents and small businesses. I am working diligently with my colleagues in the House to quell the

current economic crisis, by addressing the core issue of the broader economic downturn- the housing crisis.”

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the Congress.*

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